

Town to host tall ship in May, maybe two in '99

By John Chaffee
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DUXBURY — Tall ships are heading to Duxbury.

One will visit this year and perhaps two more next year, a reminder of those halcyon days of the early 1800s when Duxbury was a major center for the building of tall ships.

Harbormaster Donald Beers said last week that he expects the HMS Rose to arrive May 15 to serve as the centerpiece for the official opening of the new Duxbury Maritime School.

And Beers has been approached by the sponsors of an international golf cruise for permission to anchor two new luxury sailing vessels, the Star Clipper and the Star Flyer, off Standish Shore during the 1999 Ryder Cup golf matches at The Country Club in Brookline.

The two 360-foot-long, four-masted private yachts would serve as floating hotels during the summer tournament, which will pit the best American professional golfers against the best from Europe.

The 340 passengers aboard the two ships, 170 from each, would be brought ashore by launch each day and taken to the tournament site by bus, Beers said.

The Star Clipper was anchored off the Spanish coast and used as a floating hotel during the Ryder Cup matches in Valderrama last year.

The two vessels usually sail the Caribbean, the Mediterranean and the Far East.

Duxbury

"It's all very preliminary," Beers said of the luxury ship possibility, "but the sponsors want a historic seaport, and part of my job is to be an ambassador for the town."

The visit of the HMS Rose is more probable, Beers said.

While the Star Clipper and the Star Flyer are square-rigged only on their foremasts and schooner-rigged otherwise, the Rose is square-rigged on all three masts.

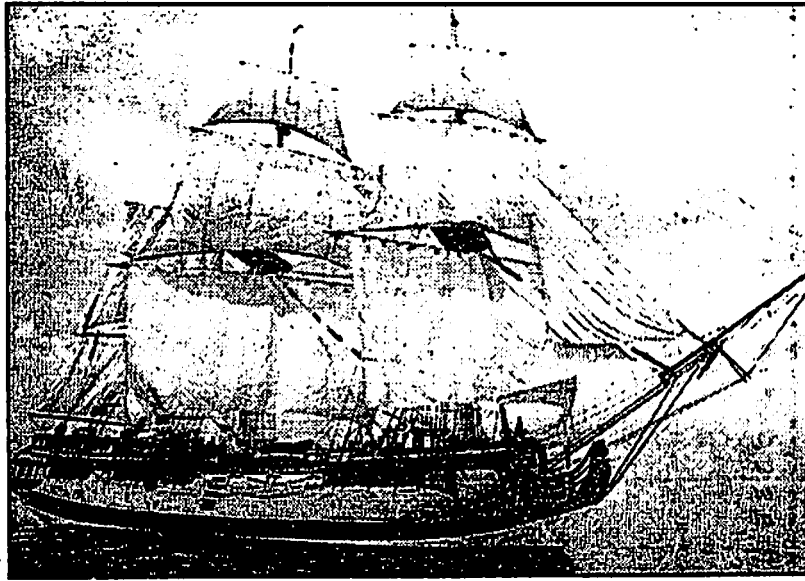
Each of the luxury vessels has a maximum sail area of 36,000 square feet. The Rose has a sail area of 13,000 square feet.

Built in Nova Scotia in 1970, the Rose is a replica of a British frigate built in England in 1757. The original Rose, armed with 24 cannons, played an active role in the American Revolution.

The tallest active wooden tall ship in the world, the Rose is owned by a non-profit foundation, is berthed in Bridgeport, Conn., and is used primarily for educational voyages of a week or more.

A frequent overnight summer visitor to Warren Cove in Plymouth, the ship has never sailed into Duxbury.

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File photo

The HMS Rose, a replica of a British frigate built in 1757, will visit Duxbury in May to help open the new maritime school.

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If Duxbury selectmen waive local tie-up rules, the Rose will dock at the town pier on the afternoon of May 15 and stay until the 17th or 18th.

While in Duxbury, the 179-foot-long Rose will provide the setting for a variety of events linked to the official opening of the new Duxbury Bay Maritime School.

The school, which will be housed in Snug Harbor quarters next to the town pier, plans to host a \$50-a-person welcoming reception aboard the Rose from 6 to 9 p.m. May 15.

The following day, a Saturday, the

Rose will be open for tours and an "anchors aweigh family festival." The cost will be \$5 per person or \$10 for a family.

That night from 6 to 10, there will be an opening gala for the maritime school aboard ship. The cost will be \$100 a person.

The newly commissioned non-profit school will provide sailing and marine ecology programs year-round, beginning this spring.

From noon to 3 p.m. on Sunday the 17th, the Rose will again be open for tours.

The 550-ton vessel is expected to leave Duxbury on the outgoing tide

late Sunday afternoon or just before dawn Monday.

"It will be May and the weather will be at best risky," Beers said. "I'm responsible for safety in the harbor, so my job will be to customize the ship's arrival and departure."

But if all goes well, Beers said, "it's going to be a very exciting weekend."

He said the last tall ship to sail into Duxbury was the 129-foot-long Spirit of Massachusetts, a two-masted schooner, in 1987.

Since then and until the harbor was dredged in 1997, it was not possible for vessels of such size to come into the harbor, he said.